Chiwere language

Chiwere (also called **Iowa-Otoe-Missouria** or **Báxoje-Jíwere-Ñút'achi**) was a Siouan language originally spoken by the Missouria, Otoe, and Iowa peoples, who originated in the Great Lakes region but later moved throughout the Midwest and plains. The language is closely related to Ho-Chunk, also known as Winnebago. Christian missionaries first documented Chiwere in the 1830s, but since then virtually nothing has been published about the language. Chiwere suffered a steady decline after extended European-American contact in the 1850s, and by 1940 the language had almost totally ceased to be spoken.

Chiwere	
Báxoje-Jíwere-Ñútˀachi	
Native to	United States
Region	Oklahoma, Missouri, and Kansas
Ethnicity	1,150 Iowa, Otoe, Missouria (2007)[1]
Extinct	1996[1] Fewer than 40 semi-fluent speakers[2][3]
Language family	Siouan - Western Siouan - Mississippi Valley - Chiwere–Winnebago **Chiwere**
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	`iow`
Glottolog	`iowa1245` (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/iowa1245)[4]
Linguasphere	`64-AAC-c`

Contents

Names

The Iowa tribe refers to their language as **Báxoje ich'é** or **Bah Kho Je** (pronounced [ba̰˔xodʒɛ itʃʼeˑ]). The Otoe-Missouria dialect is called **Jíwere ich'é** (pronounced [d̰ʒiˑweɾɛ itʃʼeˑ]). The spelling *Chiwere*, used mostly by linguists, derives from the fact that the language has an aspiration distinction rather than a voice distinction (see the phonology section below), so that the unaspirated stops /b̰ d̰ d̰ʒ g̰/ are variably voiced [b d dʒ g] or unvoiced [p t tʃ k]. Although [tʃ] is a valid pronunciation of the first sound of *Jiwere ~ Chiwere*, it may mislead English speakers into pronouncing it [tʃʰ].

Similarly, a common folk etymology of *Báxoje* is "dusty noses," based on the misunderstanding of the first syllable *bá* as *pá*, or "nose."[5] However, the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma says *Bah-Kho-Je* means "grey snow," due to their winter lodges being covered with snow stained grey by fire smoke.[6]

Status

The last two fluent speakers died in the winter of 1996, and only a handful of semi-fluent speakers remain, all of whom are elderly,[3] making Chiwere critically endangered. As of 2006, an estimated four members of the Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians still speak the language, while 30 members of the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma speak their language.[2] The Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma has sponsored language workshops in the past and hopes to host more in the future. They have provided tribal elders with recording devices to collect Chiwere words and songs.[7] A 2012 NSF grant was used to provide digital access to existing audio recordings of fluent speakers.[8] The Third Annual Otoe-Missouria Language and Culture Day is planned for September 2012.[9] The Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians is establishing a language program in conjunction with the University of Oklahoma Native American Studies Department.[10]

Phonology

The phonology of Chiwere consists of approximately 33 consonants, three nasal vowels, and five oral vowels.

Consonants

Chiwere Consonant Inventory[11][12]

		Labial	Interdental	Dental	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	**Voiceless**	p		t	tʃ	k	ʔ
	Aspirated	pʰ		tʰ	tʃʰ	kʰ	
	Ejective	pʼ		tʼ	tʃʼ	kʼ	
	Voiced	b		d	dʒ	g	
Fricative	**Voiceless**		θ	s ~ ʃ		x	h
	Voiced		ð				
	Ejective		θʼ	sʼ		xʼ	
Nasal		m		n	ɲ	ŋ	
Approximant		w		ɾ	j		

The phoneme /ɾ/ has a number of variants and allophones. It can appear as a dental <u>tap</u> or <u>flap</u> [ɾ] (especially word-medially), as an alveolar fricative [r] (as in Spanish), as an (inter)dental fricative [ð], as a <u>lateral</u> [l], as a nasal [n], or as a voiced dental plosive [d].[12][13] The velar nasal phoneme /ŋ/ does not occur word-initially, being confined to "medial position after a nasal vowel."[14]

Phoneme combinations

In languages there are certain clusters of phonemes that show up in particular environments within a word. According to William Whitman's research of Chiwere, there are approximately 23 known consonant clusters which are word medial and approximately 14 of these show up word initially or word medially. In this research it has been found that the stop + stop consonant cluster *čd*, as in *áčda* ('then'),[15] shows up in the word medial position but not as a word initial phoneme cluster.

The stop + spirant clusters *ʔθ*, *ʔs*, and *ʔh* all show up word initially and word medially, whereas the stop + semivowel clusters *dw* and *gw* only show up word medially.[15] The stop + liquid clusters *bl* and *gl* show up word initially and word medially.[15] Spirant + stop clusters generally appear in both word initial and word medial position, these clusters include *θg*, *s ǰ*, *sg*, *hd*, and *hg*, however the spirant + stop clusters *sd* and *xd* only appear word medially.[15] These are all the spirant + stop clusters accounted for in the research of William Whitman, however, the spirant + stop cluster *hk* has been found to exist word medially, as in *chéthka* ('domestic cow').[16]

According to Whitman's research there are two spirant + nasal consonant clusters that have been found, which are *hm*, as in *sáhmã* ('seven') and *hn*, as in *láhnũwe* ('calumet'), however Whitman does account that *hñ* is a combination which appears as a future tense suffix.[15] After reviewing further data, the cluster *hñ* has been found in the word medial position, as in *péhñi* ('whiskey')[17] and thus appears to be another possible spirant + nasal consonant combination.

The stop + semivowel consonant clusters *θw*, *xw*, and *hw* all appear to be restricted to the word medial environment, whereas the stop + semivowel consonant cluster *sw* appears to be the only stop + semivowel known to show up both word initially, as in *swã̃la* ('to be soft') and *baswá* ('to cut piece off').[15] The stop + liquid phoneme clusters *θl*, *sl*, and *xl* have all been found in the word initial and word medial environments.[15]

Cluster metamorphosis and phenomenon

An interesting analysis of the Chiwere language has shown that the spirant + stop consonant cluster *hg* is the more commonly used pronunciation of the spirant + stop cluster *θg* and that the *hg* cluster may be replacing the *θg* altogether.[15]

In William Whitman's research, the spirant + stop combination *xd*, with the one given example used in this journal being *iblĩxdo* ('blackbird'), is mentioned as being an error for the spirant + stop combination *hd*.[15] But the spirant + stop combination *xd* has also been found in the words *chéxdó* ('buffalo bull'),[18] *náxda* ('sour'), and *náxdage* ('kick').[19] With this data we can see that the consonant cluster *xd* is a possible combination and can show up in word medial position.

Vowels

Chiwere has five <u>oral vowel</u> phonemes, /a e i o u/, and three <u>nasal vowel</u> phonemes, /ã ĩ ũ/. <u>Vowel length</u> is distinctive as well.[12]

Grammar

Chiwere grammar is agglutinative; its verbal complex is central to the structure of the language.[20] Verbs are formed by addition various affixes to a verb stem, each of which corresponds to a part of speech, such as a preposition, pronoun, case marker and so forth. Concepts such as possession, reflexivity and grammatical number, as well subject-object relation and case (including nine instrumental prefixes) are also expressed via affixing. In this way, large, complete sentences can be formed out of a single complex word.

Aside from its complex verbal morphology, Chiwere differs from English in a number of significant ways. There are separate male and female registers,[21] and interrogatives are formed with the question particle *je*, though this is omitted in informal speech. Finally, Chiwere word order is subject-object-verb, in contrast to English SVO order.[22]

Verbal complex

The verbal complex is formed of preverbal and postverbal affixes, with preverbal affixes communicating positional, instrumental and pronominal elements.[20] These are added to a verb stem, which can be mono-, duo- or polysyllabic, and either agent (transitive) or patient (intransitive). Most verb stems are passive. Altogether, the Chiwere verb complex is arranged as follows:

[wa- pronoun] [wa- directional] [positional] [-wa/ri- pronouns] [ha-/ra- pronouns] [reflexive] [possession] [gi- directional] [instrumental] STEM [pronoun suffix] [causative][23]

Positional prefixes

Positional prefixes occupy the first position in the verbal complex. These prefixes refer to the location or direction of the verb's action:[24]

- a- on, upon, over
- i- at, to, by
- u- in, within, into

Pronominal prefixes

Chiwere distinguishes three persons – first, second and inclusive, which functions as an inclusive first person plural. Each person has an agent (subject) and patient (object) form. The agent forms mark the subjects of active verbs, whereas the patient forms mark the objects of active verbs and the subjects of passive verbs, making Chiwere, like many other Siouan languages, active-stative. Third person forms as they exist in English are not directly marked.[25] Following are the subject and object forms of the pronominal prefixes:[24]

- First Person: ha- hi-
- Second Person: ra- ri-
- Inclusive: hi- wa-wa-

(note that the inclusive object form is spelled "wa-wa" because it can be separated by the positional prefixes)

The plural forms of these pronominal forms are expressed via a combination of the above listed prefixes with suffixes. Thus:[24]

- First Person: hi-…wi, wa-wa…wi
- Second Person: ra-…wi, ri-…wi
- Inclusive (pl.): …wi, wa-
- Inclusive: …ñe, wa-…wi

Wa- prefix

This prefix, perhaps best translated as "something," occurs before every other verbal element except for the pronominal *hi-*, and approximates the English third person plural object of a transitive verb. Additionally, the prefix can be used as a <u>dummy pronoun</u> to make transitive verbs intransitive; these verbal forms are often used as nouns, and this prefix is thus the general method of forming nouns from verb stems. There are several intransitive verbs that take the *wa-* prefix idiomatically, wherein the prefix has no literal meaning.[26]

Reflexive prefix

Verbs are made <u>reflexive</u> by the "ki-" prefix; <u>reduplication</u> of this prefix ("kiki-") expresses reciprocity.[27] Thus:

- Uhá**ki**gisa (I helped myself)
- U**kiki**sa ke (They helped each other)[24]

A number of verbs that are non-reflexive in English take the reflexive prefix in Chiwere.[26]

Directional prefixes

These three prefixes serve to indicate an <u>indirect object</u>[28] and as such are grouped together, even though they do not occupy the same position within the verbal complex:

- wa- indicates that the action moves away from a third point not occupied by the speaker
- gi- indicates that the action moves towards a third point and communicates the English prepositions of to, for or concerning
- gla- indicates that the action reverts towards the subject and is used to form possessive constructions

Instrumental prefixes

There are nine separate prefixes that indicate <u>instrumentality</u>, all of which change passive verbs into active.[24]

- wa- by pushing with the hand
- gi- by pushing or striking with a held object
- ru- by pulling with the hand
- ri- by means of an intermediary object
- na- by means of the feet or a machine
- ra- by means of the mouth or teeth
- bo- by means of blow or blast
- ba- by cutting

- da- because of heating or freezing

Causative suffix

The causative, wherein the subject causes or makes something else to do or be something, is expressed via the suffix -*hi*.

Tense

"Tense" in Chiwere can be divided into present/past and future. Present and past tenses are unmarked in the language, and are distinguished by actual statements of time using words like "yesterday" or "today." The future tense is indicated with the particle *hnye*, which follows the verb.[29]

Personal pronouns

Chiwere is a pro-drop language;[30] once the subject of the sentence has been established, it can be omitted.

- First Person: mi'e (sing.), hi'e (inc.)
- Second Person: ri'e
- Third Person: alé

Negation

Statements are negated with the particle *skunyi*, which follows the verb.[29]

Commands

Commands are formed using the simple verb stem plus a gender-specific particle – le for male speakers and lé for female speakers.[31]

Classes

The Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Oklahoma's Otoe Language Program teaches weekly classes in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and Red Rock, Oklahoma.[32]

See also

- Truman Washington Dailey - the last fully fluent native speaker

Notes

1. Chiwere (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/iow/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
2. Anderton, Alice, PhD. Status of Indian Languages in Oklahoma. (http://www.ahalenia.com/iws/status.html) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20100917050404/http://www.ahalenia.com/iws/status.html) 2010-09-17 at the Wayback Machine *Intertribal Wordpath Society.* 2009 (22 Feb 2009)

3. Welcome to the Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Language Website. (http://iowayotoelang.nativeweb.or g/) *Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Language.* (retrieved 23 Feb 2009)

4. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). **"Iowa-Oto" (http://glott olog.org/resource/languoid/id/iowa1245)**. *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.

5. GoodTracks, Jimm (1992) *Baxoje-Jiwere-Nyut'aji - Ma'unke: Iowa-Otoe-Missouria Language to English.* Boulder, CO: Center for the Study of the Languages of the Plains and Southwest. *(also)* GoodTracks, Jimm (16 August 2008), personal communication. Ioway Otoe-Missouria Language Website (http://iowayotoelang.nativeweb.org/)

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10. Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians Job Announcement. (https://archive.today/20130204132542/ht tp://www.thejobnetwork.com/employee/c.asp?action=employee.jobDescription.init&AffiliateID= 1033&param=3775892) 7 Jan 2009 (23 Feb 2009)

11. Whitman, 1947, p. 234

12. Schweitzer, Marjorie M. (2001) "Otoe and Missouria." In *Plains*, ed. Raymond J. DeMallie. Vol. 13 of *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. William C. Sturtevant. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, pg. 447

13. GoodTracks, Jimm G. "Orthographic Updates (http://iowayotoelang.nativeweb.org/pdf/orthogra phic_updates.pdf)" (PDF). *Ioway Otoe Language Study*. Retrieved October 17, 2011.

14. Whitman, 1947, p. 235

15. Whitman, 1947, p. 236

16. GoodTracks, Rev. 2007, p.2

17. GoodTracks, Rev. 2010, p.13

18. GoodTracks, Rev. 2010, p.2

19. GoodTracks, Rev. 2007, p.10

20. Whitman 1947, p. 241.

21. Wistrand-Robinson, et al 1977, p. 86.

22. Wistrand-Robinson, et al 1977, p. 91-2.

23. Whitman 1947, p. 247.

24. GoodTracks 2002

25. Whitman 1947, p. 242.

26. Whitman 1947, p. 244.

27. Whitman 1947, p. 244-5.

28. Whitman 1947, p. 245.

29. Wistrand-Robinson, et al 1977, p. 97.

30. Wistrand-Robinson, et al 1977, p. 95.

31. Wistrand-Robinson, et al 1978, p. 23.

32. "Otoe Language Program." (http://www.omtribe.org/index.php?education-otoe-language-progr am) *The Otoe-Missouria Tribe.* Retrieved 11 Feb 2012.

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External links

- Ioway-Otoe-Missouria Language Website (http://www.iowayotoelang.nativeweb.org)
- Ioway-Otoe Verb Composition (http://ioway.nativeweb.org/language/conjugations.pdf)
- Ioway Cultural Institute : Language (http://ioway.nativeweb.org/language/index.htm)
- Iowa-Otoe-Missouri page (http://www.native-languages.org/otoe.htm), Native-Languages.org
- "Otoe-Missouria Hymns" (https://web.archive.org/web/20071216062041/http://native.brokencla w.net/otoe/otoe_hymns.html), translated from English by Earl Plumley.
- Otoe-Missouria Language Department (http://www.omlanguage.org/)

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